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RECEIVED and FILED by the
NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF
VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS
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STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS -
BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS

IN THE MATTER OF	:	
	:	Administrative Action
PRABHAKAR R. CHEENEPALLI, D.V.M.	:	
License No. 29VI00523000	:	
	:	CONSENT ORDER
TO PRACTICE VETERINARY MEDICINE	:	
IN THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY	:	
	:	

This matter was opened to the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") following the Board's review of a consumer complaint filed by J.S., in April 2014, following her visit, with her pet to Prabhakar R. Cheenepalli, D.V.M., at Denville Animal Hospital ("Hospital"). In her complaint to the Board, J.S. alleged that the respondent engaged in, among other contentions, negligence, misdiagnosis, and failure to respond to an emergency, in the

treatment of her seven (7) year old male Pug, "Kobi," beginning in May 2012.

The Board's review of this matter revealed that Kobi was presented to the Hospital in December 2013 with complaints of diarrhea, sleeplessness, vomiting, severe shaking and trembling, lack of appetite, and dehydration. Dr. Cheenepalli performed a physical examination, a blood sample and X-rays. Blood test results indicated a high red blood cell count while the X-rays showed nothing unusual. Respondent made no diagnosis of Kobi at that time. Unsatisfied with her dog's condition, J.S. later took Kobi to a referral facility where he was diagnosed with gastroenteritis.

Once home, Kobi's condition did not improve and J.S. began to suspect that the dog was diabetic. She brought Kobi back to Dr. Cheenepalli on March 10, 2014 who, subsequent to more testing, agreed with the owner that the dog was most likely diabetic. Respondent sent Kobi home with antibiotics and dispensed insulin to J.S. No type of insulin was recorded in the dog's patient records. Additionally, there was no discussion by the respondent with J.S. regarding the monitoring of Kobi once administered insulin.

J.S. followed Dr. Cheenepalli's instructions, administering insulin to Kobi as prescribed, 20 units a day, ten (10) units in the A.M. and another ten (10) in the P.M. This

regime was continued for approximately one week. When the dog's condition did not improve, J.S. returned Kobi to the Hospital on March 17th. There the dog was found to be hypoglycemic. Three blood glucose tests were run with the following results: 28, 24 and 24. J.S. was instructed to completely stop administering the insulin to the dog and return for an examination three days later.

Kobi was therefore not administered insulin for three full days when J.S. returned the dog to Dr. Cheenepalli for a re-evaluation. Following his examination on March 20th, respondent instructed the owner to re-start the insulin at a decreased dosage of three (3) units, two (2) times a day. Dr. Cheenepalli ignored the trace ketones in the dog's urine. Again, no monitoring of the dog was recommended or performed by the respondent.

When the dog's condition deteriorated, Kobi was presented again to the referral facility, on March 21st, where he was found to have ketones in his urine and very high glucose levels. The dog was then treated for ketoacidosis.

The Board, following its review of the relevant documents in this matter, concluded that Dr. Cheenepalli engaged in repeated acts of negligence, in violation of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(d), in that he: 1) started insulin treatment at a high dosage without close monitoring; 2) stopped the insulin entirely, seven

days later, due to severe hypoglycemia again without close monitoring or a referral of the patient to a referral facility; and 3) re-initiating the insulin again without close monitoring and despite the finding of ketones in the dog's urine. The Board concludes that starting insulin at a high dosage then seven days later completely stopping the insulin for hypoglycemia, then re-starting the insulin despite the ketones noted in the dog's urine, all while failing to closely monitor the dog or refer the dog to another veterinarian, constitutes substantial deviations from acceptable veterinary standards of practice.

Additionally, the Board further concludes that Dr. Cheenepalli violated its patient record regulation, contrary to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(h) and N.J.A.C. 13:44-4.9, in that his medical records for Kobi did not contain the information required by the regulation. Specifically, the Board concludes that respondent's records failed to contain information including, but not limited to: 1) the name of the facility, which is to appear on every page of the record; 2) the name, initials, or other identifying information to indicate the identity of the licensee or agent making the entry in the patient record; and 3) the treatment or treatment plan prescribed, including a specific notation of any medications or modalities prescribed, such as a notation of the type of insulin prescribed. The conduct detailed above constitutes

violations of the statutes and regulations governing the practice of veterinary medicine and therefore establishes a basis for the Board to take disciplinary action.

The parties desiring to resolve this matter without the need for further disciplinary proceedings; and respondent acknowledging and not contesting the findings of the Board and waiving his right to a hearing; and the Board having been satisfied that the resolution adequately protects the public health, safety and welfare, and for good cause shown;

IT IS, THEREFORE, ON THIS 19th DAY OF MARCH 2015,

ORDERED THAT:

1. Respondent Prabhakar R. Cheenepalli, D.V.M., is hereby reprimanded for his conduct as described above, in violation of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(d) and N.J.A.C. 13:44-4.9.

2. Dr. Cheenepalli shall cease and desist from further violations of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(d) and N.J.A.C. 13:44-4.9.

3. Respondent shall take and successfully complete a minimum of ten (10) hours of Board approved courses of continuing education in the area of Endocrinology, to include diabetes analysis and treatment, and provide proof of such successful completion to the Board within six (6) months of the date of this Order. All continuing education courses taken by the respondent to fulfill this requirement shall be RACE

approved and have no affiliation with or be sponsored by the Denville Animal Hospital. Additionally, no continuing education credits completed in compliance with this Consent Order may be used to satisfy the minimum continuing education requirements for any biennial renewal period.

4. Dr. Cheenepalli shall provide restitution to owner J.S. in the amount of \$350.00 for the cost of veterinary care. The restitution shall be made payable to J.S., by certified check or money order, and shall be made within ten (10) days of the entry of this Consent Order. Proof of said restitution shall be submitted to Jonathan Eisenmenger, Executive Director of the Board, at 124 Halsey Street, Sixth Floor, Post Office Box 45020, Newark, New Jersey 07101, within ten (10) days of the payment of the restitution to J.S.

5. Respondent shall pay a civil penalty in the aggregate amount of \$3,500.00 for the following violations: 1) \$2,500.00 for engaging in repeated acts of negligence, in violation of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(d); and 2) \$1,000.00 for record keeping violations, contrary to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(h) and N.J.A.C. 13:44-4.9.

The civil penalty shall be submitted, by certified check or money order, made payable to the State of New Jersey and forwarded to Jonathan Eisenmenger, Executive Director of the Board, at the address listed in paragraph 4,

contemporaneously with submission of this Order. Subsequent violations will subject respondent to enhanced penalties pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-25.

In the alternative, respondent may pay the civil penalty, totaling \$3,500.00, in equal monthly installment payments of \$145.00 for a total of twenty-three (23) months. The twenty-fourth (24) and final payment will total \$165.00. The first payment shall be made contemporaneously with the signing of this Order with subsequent payments due on the fifteenth of each month thereafter until the total amount is paid in full.

Any failure to make any installment payment within ten (10) days of the due date shall cause the entire remaining balance to become immediately due and payable without further notice. Further, failure to pay the penalty within the time period allotted above will result in the filing of a Certificate of Debt, including the applicable interest permitted by the New Jersey Court Rules, and may result in subsequent disciplinary proceedings before the Board for failure to comply with an Order of the Board.

6. Failure to comply with any of the provisions of this Order or remit any and all payments required by this Order will result in the filing of a Certificate of Debt and may

result in subsequent disciplinary proceedings for failure to
comply with an Order of the Board.

NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF
VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS

By: Mark W. Logan VMD
MARK W. LOGAN, V.M.D.
President

I have read and understand the within
Consent Order and agree to be bound
by its terms. Consent is hereby given
to the Board to enter this Order.

Prabhak R. Cheenepalli
PRABHAKAR R. CHEENEPALLI, D.V.M.

3/8/2015
DATED: